



Community Project Funding: Frequently Asked Questions

This year, the House Appropriations Committee will be accepting Community Project Funding (CPF) requests. These will be project-specific funding requests for towns, cities, municipalities, and nonprofit entities in Maine's 2nd District. Each office will be limited to ten Community Project Funding requests, though only a handful may actually be funded.

Community engagement and support is crucial in determining which projects are worthy of Federal funding. Only projects with demonstrated community support will be considered and our office will be required to present to the Appropriations Committee evidence of community support that were compelling factors in our decision to submit the request. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- Letters of support from elected community leaders (e.g. mayors or other officials);
- Press articles highlighting the need for the requested Community Project Funding;
- Support from newspaper editorial boards;
- Projects listed on State intended use plans, community development plans, or other publicly available planning documents; or
- Resolutions passed by city councils or boards.

Please note that only the below accounts are eligible for CPF requests so please review the criteria when determining whether or not your project can be funded. Each project request must be for Fiscal Year 2022 funds only and cannot include a request for multi year funding.

What is Community Project Funding?

Community Project Funding is generally defined as spending provisions in federal legislation that:

- Are requested on behalf of constituents or constituent organizations by a Member of Congress or Senator;
- Provides, authorizes, or recommends a specific amount of discretionary budget authority, credit authority, or specific funding amount to a specific entity for a specific purpose; and,
- The purpose of the project must meet the objective of a federal program under existing law.

Community Project Funding is typically requested for projects with a clear purpose and goal above and beyond normal operating activities, for which private, non-federal funding is not available or sufficient. Community Project Funding will typically only serve as a partial contribution to the total cost of a project.

Is there a deadline for submitting a request?

Yes. The deadline to submit a Community Project Funding request for our office is Wednesday, April 14th.

What if I miss a deadline? Are any exceptions made if the bill hasn't been passed?

Congressional offices review numerous requests in a short amount of time. As a result, deadlines are strictly enforced. Once our office submits my requests to the full committee, we are unable to change or add requests. That is why it's important to submit your request before the deadline.

Are Community Project Funding requests publicly disclosed?

Yes. All requests for Community Project Funding submitted by Representative Golden

to the committee for consideration must be publicly listed on our website, including the name and address of the requestor, the amount requested, and the justification for use of taxpayer funds.

How many Community Project Funding requests will the Congressman make?

Each Representative is limited to making 10 requests for Community Project Funding across the entire House Appropriations Committee for Fiscal Year 2022

Are there limitations on what Community Project Funding can be used for?

Yes. Federal Programs have very specific restrictions on how federal funds can be used. It is recommended that you closely examine this guide for references to eligible uses or limitations on use. Generally, funding cannot be used for debt service, recurring or routine expenses, reimbursement of costs, or projects that cannot demonstrate value to the community.

Can I request funding for “bricks and mortar” projects?

In general, no. One of the most common requests for funding is for building construction or renovation. Most appropriations accounts specifically prohibit this kind of project given the high demand. There are some exceptions to this rule, including the Economic Development Initiative under the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and certain projects under the Military Construction Subcommittee.

How much should I request?

It depends on the account from which you are requesting funds. You should not request more funds than you need or that can be realistically spent in the Fiscal Year for which you receive the funds. While you should request the amount that can be expended in the upcoming Fiscal Year that you need, please remember that projects are rarely funded fully due to budgetary restraints. Receipt of funds from Community Project Funding in one Fiscal Year is not a guarantee for Community Project Funding in future Fiscal Years.

How should I determine how much funding to request?

The level of funding request should be justified by the project proposal, budget plan, and community support. Many Congressionally directed spending projects in the past fell somewhere between \$10,000 and \$1,000,000 with some exceptions. A helpful indication may be to look at what a typical grantee may receive for a one-year allocation of funding for the specific program you are interested in requesting a Community Project Funding request for.

Is there a minimum amount one should request for Community Project Funding?

No, there is no minimum amount of funding to request.

What if I do not know the appropriate Account or Agency for my project request?

Our “Community Project Funding Guidance” document has information on all available accounts. Requestors should use this guide to identify the appropriate account to identify one that meets the needs of your project or organization. Please call our office if you need additional information.

If my project is funded, will I receive the full amount I request?

There is no guarantee that an approved Community Project Funding request will be funded at the requested level. It is very likely that you will only receive a portion of your request, if funded at all. This is mostly due to budgetary restraints. Please keep this in mind when requesting support for your project.

Do I need letters of support?

Yes. The more community support for a project, the better. Letters of support from local, municipal, and state elected officials and stakeholders, as well as editorials and articles in local newspapers on the importance and necessity of the project are all important.

I submitted a request. Will it be approved? When will I know?

The Fiscal Year 2022 Community Project Funding process is extremely targeted and very competitive. While we will look at all requests, it is strongly recommended you explore other grant and funding sources as well. Many subcommittee deadlines are in mid-April. In order for us to properly examine all requests, our office deadline is April 14th.

The House Appropriations bills are typically considered in the late spring, with the Senate considering bills in late spring and over the summer. The House and Senate have to convene a “conference committee” to work out the differences in each of those bills.

The Committee requires all members to publicly disclose and post their final requests to the Appropriations Committee once the requests are made. Please remember, even if your project is supported in the House and/or Senate Appropriations bills, the funding level is subject to change until the final bill is signed into law.

This process can be long, but we will do our best to keep all projects apprised of their status.

If my Community Project Funding request is granted, what is the process for getting the assistance and how quickly will I receive it?

In general, recipients of Community Project Funding will be contacted by the appropriate agency or office that oversees the account from which your project received funding. This cannot happen until the appropriations bill in which your project was listed is signed into law. The timing varies between departments and agencies – some may start the process within several weeks, others may take several months after the bill’s enactment into law.

In most cases, you will have to complete and submit a grant application outlining the project’s goals, cost estimates and other requirements. You will work with a program or contract officer to complete these steps; they may have questions or additional

requirements that could affect the timing of the obligations or outlay of funding to your organization.

The process of accessing funding and the time it takes to complete the necessary steps, surprises many recipients who expect the money to be provided immediately.

Please be sure to take this into account when submitting a request.

Can I depend on receiving Community Project Funding for the same project more than once?

Generally, no. Most successful requests are one-time infusions of funding, generally used to launch a project or partially contribute towards the total cost of a project.

Given the limitations on the appropriations process for Community Project Funding, there is no guarantee that Congress will support a project for more than one year. However, you should discuss the needs of your project with your Congressional sponsor(s) if you believe that federal support will be needed beyond a single fiscal year.

Can funds from the American Rescue Plan for State/Local Government Relief be used for the non-federal match component of Community Project Funding?

Our office anticipates guidance from the Department of Treasury to address this question. In the CARES Act, state and local funding was eligible to pay for the non-federal share of a narrow set of Stafford Act costs related to FEMA.

Are all non-profits eligible?

501(c)(3)'s are eligible for Community Project Funding. Some 501(c)(6)'s may be eligible on a case by case basis. These include Chambers of Commerce, Farm Bureau's, or Veterans Service Organizations.

What is the anticipated timing for disbursement of Community Project Funding relative to passage of the legislation?

When Community Project Funding is secured in the final spending bill, this will create a grant program for which the requester is the only eligible applicant. The requester will need to apply for the grant that is their Community Project Funding before funds will be disbursed. In terms of timeline, this will vary by federal department/agency as this will be a new process to implement. For context, regular grants usually take between 6-10 months.

Does Fiscal Year 2022 refer to the federal fiscal year or the state fiscal year?

This refers to Federal Fiscal Year. Many states, like Maine, have a fiscal year that begins in July. It is not an issue if the state FY 2023 overlaps with federal FY 2022.

If the FY22 spending bill isn't finalized until much later (i.e. December 2021), will Community Project Funding requests still need to be fully obligated and spent by September 30, 2022, or will they have 12 months after enactment to obligate funds?

The question on our Community Project Funding application regarding 12 months is primarily for planning purposes and to assess whether the recipient is ready to access the funds.

If approved, Community Project Funding will be available for the same "period of availability" as other federal funds in the same account. That could be for one-year, two-years, or five-years depending on the project type.

Will Community Project Funding be taken from the overall funding pot for specific agencies?

As of now, the House Appropriations Committee does not have an overall funding level for discretionary spending for Fiscal Year 2022. However, no more than 1% of discretionary spending will be allocated to fund all Community Project Funding.

What limitations are there on non-federal matching funds? Can this come from private donations or is it limited to state and local funding sources? Would in-kind matches be determined at the programmatic level or is there a general rule?

Some programs allow for in-kind matches. The criteria differ based on what the laws for each agency and program allows.

If a non-profit did a membership campaign or donation drive and is able to show the number of donors, as well as that donors were predominantly local residents, would that be considered acceptable community support?

The House Appropriations Committee has recommended publicly available documents such as letters from community leaders, press articles, resolutions passed by local governments, and public planning documents.

Are capital projects eligible for Community Project Funding?

In certain cases, yes. The “Community Project Funding Guidance” document outlines which programs do and don’t include capital funding.

Is there a preference for programmatic funding or Community Project Funding?

There is no preference, but the distinction between the two should help guide whether your request is programmatic in nature or a Community Project Funding request. Community Project Funding is for a specific governmental entity or non-profit to carry out a specific program in the spending bill at a specified level.

Can Community Project Funding be used for payroll and other operating expenses?

No. Community Project Funding is intended as a one-time infusion of resources to move a project forward that benefits the community, and using it for operating expenses would potentially create a budgeting cliff. There's no guarantee that if one receives Community Project Funding in one fiscal year that there will be subsequent funding in later fiscal years for the same project.

When will we hear back about our request?

This will be a long and competitive process. First, our office will publicly post the 10 Community Project Funding requests Representative Golden will submit to the House Appropriations Committee. Then, the House Appropriations Committee will review and finalize a list of Community Project Funding requests from across the country to be included in the Fiscal Year 22 House spending bill, which is expected to pass in the late summer.

Any differences between the House and Senate Appropriations bills will need to be resolved in the early fall before passing and enacting a final spending bill for Fiscal Year 22.